

Mommy's Story

An introduction for younger children
to learn about a parent's MS



Multiple Sclerosis Association of America

Mommy's Story

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MSAA strives to provide useful, up-to-date information on matters of concern to MS patients and their families. This material is intended for general informational purposes only, and it does not constitute medical advice. You should not use the information presented as a means of diagnosis or for determining treatment. For diagnosis and treatment options, you are urged to consult your physician.

To Our Readers,

This publication was written to encourage parents with multiple sclerosis (MS) to begin the conversation about the diagnosis and ongoing implications of MS with young children. This book is suitable for children ages three to seven. Our hope is that as parents share this special book with young children, it will be the start of a conversation that is continuous throughout the children's development as the family learns to live together with the disease. Encouraging children to express and name their feelings will create a positive experience for both parents and children as they learn to understand and successfully manage MS within the family.

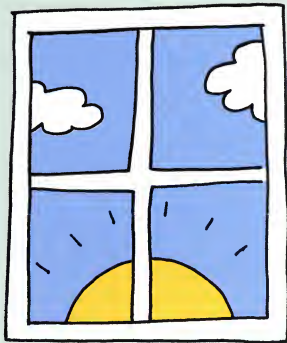


An important fact to remember is that parents are the very first and most vital teachers in the lives of their growing children. Parents teach their children from the very beginning that life is indeed a journey, marked with change and transition. Our intention is that readers will use this book to guide their children in understanding multiple sclerosis, helping to reduce any fear or anxiety, while showing them the importance of loving and caring for one another.

Cindy Richman
MSAA Senior Director of Services

*If you have any questions about MS in general, or would like to discuss specific issues relating to MS and the family, please call MSAA's Helpline at **(800) 532-7667** to speak with a client services consultant, or email **MSquestions@mymsaa.org**. We hope you enjoy the book!*

Your mommy is very special.
She loves you more than
anything else in the
whole world.





Your mommy takes good
care of you.

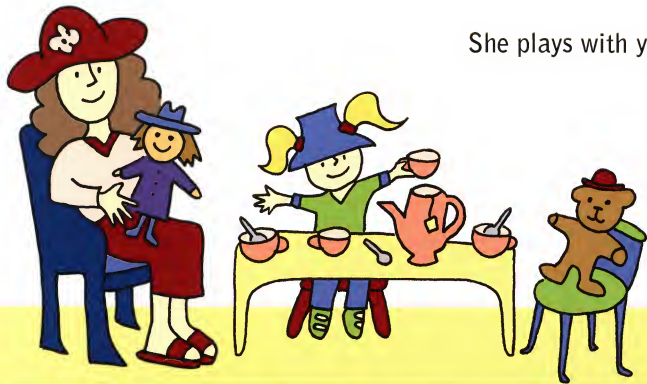
She helps you get
dressed.



She gives you good
things to eat.



She plays with you.



She kisses you
goodnight.



Some mommies have something called "multiple sclerosis." An easy name for this is "MS." Does your mommy have MS? If so, she may not feel well all of the time.

Sometimes your mommy might have trouble with her eyes and not see things as well. When this happens, she might want to stay at home and have some quiet time.

Sometimes your mommy may feel tired or sleepy. She may want to rest or take a nap.



If your mommy needs some quiet time or is feeling tired and needs to rest, you can help make her feel better. Maybe your mommy needs something while resting, like a soft pillow. You can help by bringing the pillow to her.

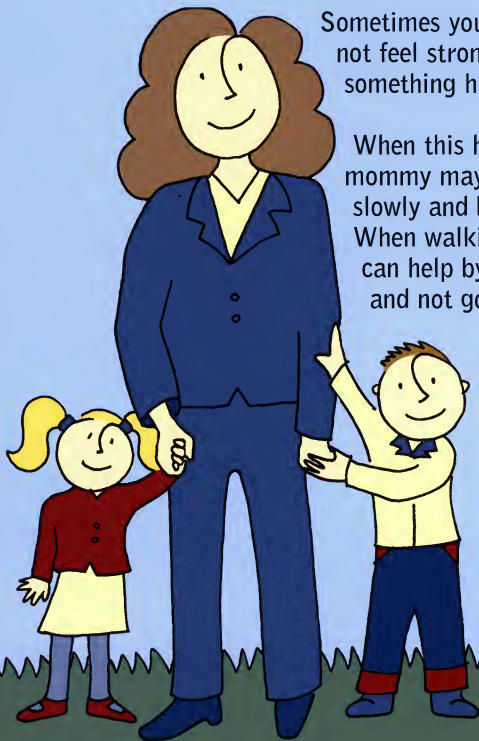


You can also help by playing quietly nearby and not making too much noise. Coloring pictures, doing a puzzle, or looking at a book are good things to do when you don't want to make any noise.



Sometimes your mommy might not feel strong, or maybe something hurts a little.

When this happens, your mommy may walk more slowly and be more careful. When walking together, you can help by holding hands and not going too fast.





Sometimes your mommy might use a cane, a walker, a wheelchair, or a scooter. These things make it easier for your mommy to move around and go places. You can help by holding a door open when needed.

Not everyone uses a cane, a walker, a wheelchair, or a scooter, so these might look new and different to you and to your friends. But that's okay. These things are very helpful, and once you've seen them a few times, they won't look new or different anymore!

Sometimes your mommy may not feel happy. She might have a sad face, or maybe even a mad face.



This is not your fault.
It's just how mommy
is feeling at the time.




If you wait a little while,
mommy will feel happy again,
and have a happy face!



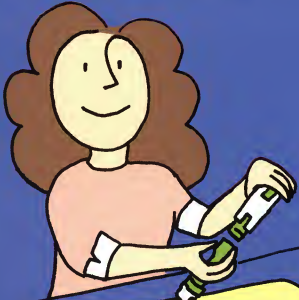
When mommy is feeling sad or even mad,
you can help by giving her a hug and saying,



And before you know it, mommy's happy face will come back.



Everyone gets sick at one time or another. Sometimes you might have a cold, and this makes you sneeze and blow your nose. When you don't feel well, your mommy may give you some medicine to help you feel better.

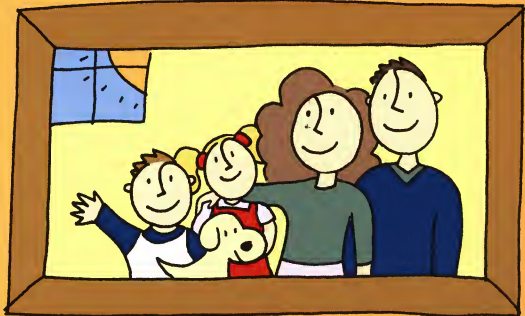


Your mommy may sometimes have a cold, just like you! And sometimes mommy doesn't feel well because of her MS. Mommy may need to take medicine to help feel better, too. Sometimes she will take a pill, or sometimes she will use a needle.

When you have a cold, you try not to sneeze too close to anyone else, because you don't want them to catch a cold and sneeze, too!



But no one will get MS from your mommy. It's not like a cold! It's just something that some people have, but no one can catch it from one another.



Sometimes your mommy will go to see the doctor. Sometimes she may visit the hospital. Seeing a doctor or visiting the hospital will help your mommy to feel better.

If you don't know about something, be sure to ask questions. This will help you to understand what your mommy is doing and how she is feeling.

If your mommy will be in the hospital for a few days, you can draw a picture or write a letter to send to her. This will help to make your mommy feel happy.





Your mommy takes good care of you, but sometimes someone else may need to help. This may be your grandmother or grandfather... an aunt or an uncle... a sister or brother... a baby-sitter... or maybe a good friend. This person can help to take care of you until your mommy feels better.

Does your mommy have MS? She may sometimes feel tired or walk more slowly, but that's okay. Your mommy takes good care of you, and you can help her, too – by doing things like bringing a pillow... playing quietly... holding hands... opening a door... giving hugs... and saying, "I love you!"





Your mommy is very special.
She loves you more than
anything else in the
whole world.

And that's Mommy's Story.



The mission of the Multiple Sclerosis Association of America (MSAA) is to enrich the quality of life for everyone affected by multiple sclerosis. MSAA accomplishes its mission by offering many vital programs and services to members of the MS community.

MSAA's free programs and services include: a toll-free telephone Helpline with trained consultants; award-winning publications and website (featuring news updates, research articles, and MSI educational videos); Equipment Distribution Program; MRI Institute and MRI Diagnostic Fund; regional events and activities; and much more. Newer programs include tools to help individuals manage their MS, such as: My MS Manager™ (a free application for mobile phones to track and record symptoms, medications, and other details); My MS Resource Locator (to find nearby professionals and programs); and MSAA's S.E.A.R.C.H.™ program (to learn about the FDA-approved treatments for MS). Please call (800) 532-7667 or visit mymsaa.org for more information.

Help or support to MSAA in any way is truly appreciated. To make a donation or inquire about fundraising (including MSAA's Swim for MS program), please call (800) 532-7667 or visit mymsaa.org.

Mommy's Story received a Grand Award in the APEX 2007 Awards for Publication Excellence; was honored in the 2007 National Health Information Awards; and was included in the American Corporate Identity 2008 book and the 2009 Big Book of Self Promotion by Crescent Hill Books/HarperCollins. Its counterpart, *Daddy's Story*, received a 2011 National Health Information Award as well as a 2011 Magnum Opus Award.



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